

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 20, 2005

Contact: K. Danielle Edwards
615-741-9192 (Office)
615-417-9097 (Cell)

DCS Round-Up Nets Several Juvenile Absconders
First DCS round-up lays groundwork for statewide plan to capture runaways from state custody

NASHVILLE, Tenn. - The Tennessee Department of Children's Services, in coordination with the Metro Nashville Police Department and Davidson County Juvenile Court, has completed its first round-up of juvenile offenders who have absconded from state custody. This round-up, held on the morning of Wednesday, April 20, focused on capturing several juveniles in Davidson County. Four of the 13 juveniles targeted for the round-up were captured, and have been placed back under the oversight of the Department.

"Though we did not catch all 13 of the juveniles on our list, we feel that we have made some tangible progress in this area, observable from the success we had in bringing them back into custody," said Steven Hornsby, the recently appointed deputy commissioner of juvenile justice - a newly created position developed to enable DCS to focus more directly on juvenile justice issues.

The absconders targeted for capture during this round-up were scored according to a newly developed community risk assessment, which takes into consideration the nature of the committed offenses, the number of escapes, whether the offenses were crimes against persons or property, and whether the offenses were classified as felonies.

"With the community risk assessment, we are targeting absconders with the most serious infractions," said Hornsby. "In addressing concerns related to this population, we are not only focused on utilizing best practices to rehabilitate our youth, but doing so in a way that does not undermine concerns about community safety."

DCS worked in conjunction with local law enforcement and the juvenile court in organizing this round-up, and will be working similarly with other police departments and courts across the state in continuing this initiative.

The Tennessee Department of Children's Services was established in 1996 to provide the best possible care for children and youth who are in state custody, or at significant risk of entering custody, and their families. Services provided by DCS include child protective services, foster care, adoption, programs for delinquent youth, probation/aftercare, and treatment and rehabilitation programs for identified youth.

###